DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 713 EA 024 342

AUTHOR Sebring, Penny A.; Camburn, Eric M.
TITLE How Teachers Are Engaging Reform in Chicago: Differences among Schools.
PUB DATE Apr 92
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 20-24, 1992).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Cooperation; Elementary Education; *Participative Decision Making; *School Restructuring; Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Influence; Teacher Participation; *Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS *Chicago Public Schools IL

ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that examined the level of teacher engagement in school reform in Chicago Public Schools and differences in the level of engagement across schools are presented in this paper. The School Reform Act of 1988 transferred much of the policymaking and administrative authority from the central school board to Local School Councils (LSCs). Teachers had little input on shaping the reform and on governance structure. A survey mailed to teachers in 473 elementary schools yielded responses from 12,000 teachers in 401 schools, with an average response rate of 78 percent for each school. Findings indicate a moderate level of teacher engagement in reform and generally positive attitudes toward changes in their schools and the potential for improvement. The level of teacher engagement varied considerably within schools. Teachers were more favorable toward reform in schools characterized by shared decision-making, strong leadership, teacher collegiality, and community support. A recommendation is made to provide a supportive teachers' work environment, especially in the areas of social and human relations, to facilitate their commitment to the goals of reform. Two figures and two tables are included. The appendix provides a glossary of variable terms used in the statistical analysis. (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
P. Sebring
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED349713

How Teachers Are Engaging Reform in Chicago:

Differences Among Schools

by

Penny A. Sebring

Eric M. Camburn

Consortium on Chicago School Research

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, 1992

Note: *This report reflects the interpretations of the authors; no formal endorsement by Consortium members should be assumed.*

EA 024 342

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

How Teachers Are Engaging Reform in Chicago:

Differences Among Schools

During the last two years literally thousands of Chicagoans--educators, parents, and community members--have been involved in the massive effort to implement the School Reform Act of 1988. This new law drastically changed the governance structure of the Chicago Public Schools, transferring much of the policy making and administrative authority from the central school board to the newly created Local School Councils (LSCs). The councils are composed of two teachers, six parents, and two community members, all of whom are elected, plus the principal. The law abolished tenure for principals but at the same time granted them greater authority and control over their own school. Thus the theory behind this reform is that individuals who are closest to the schools know best how to improve them, and, through collaborative work and shared decision making, they will make a difference.

A profound question for Chicago is what role will teachers assume with respect to this reform. Clearly the law tipped the balance of power away from teachers; they represent only two of the eleven places on the LSC. This shift was only partially rectified by establishing a Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC) at each school. The PPAC provides teachers with a channel through which they can advise the principal and the LSC on curriculum and instruction matters.

In addition, even though the Chicago Teachers Union was involved in the negotiations leading to the reform law, individual teachers had little opportunity to influence the massive changes that occurred. Considering that they had little input in shaping the reform and that it

left them with only a minority position in the new governance structure, it is hard to imagine that teachers would be enthusiastic about the new system. Nonetheless, school reform cannot succeed without teachers' commitment and participation. How teachers choose to play out their role in this reform will have a significant impact on student learning and the success of the overall reform effort.

To begin to address these concerns, this paper explores the degree to which teachers are engaging reform in Chicago and the differences in the level of engagement across schools. Specifically, we focus on three questions:

1. To what extent are teachers engaging the current reform in Chicago?
2. How does the level of engagement vary across schools?
3. What kinds of schools have higher levels of teacher engagement?

Prior Research: Setting the Stage

We know from prior research that, however difficult and time consuming it is to enact legislation or create programs for change, it is only the first step. Getting individuals to change their behavior, whether they are students, teachers, administrators, or parents, is yet another great hurdle. Part of this has to do with the nature of change itself. With respect to teachers, Fullan (1991) notes:

> Change is a highly personal experience--each and every one of the teachers who will be affected by change must have the opportunity to work through this experience in a way in which the rewards at least equal the cost (p. 127).

Fullan goes on to argue that one of the requisite conditions for promoting change in schools is a collegial atmosphere. In order for teachers to be able to personally assess the merits of change, they need opportunities to talk and interact with one another and with their principals. Through such interaction, teachers also develop norms of collaboration and collective experimentation. By comparing their experiences they develop a better understanding of what works best. Teachers need ongoing opportunities for interaction, so that as difficulties arise, they can turn to their peers for support and guidance.

Rosenholtz (1985, 1989) has identified two more conditions of schools -- strong principal leadership and a clear, widely accepted mission -- that increase the likelihood that change will be adopted. In schools she termed "learning enriched," teachers were more likely to adopt new practices when principals provided frequent and constructive evaluations. Furthermore, these schools exhibited a high degree of consensus on goals. In their study of high schools undergoing restructuring, Louis and Miles (1990) encountered a similar phenomenon. Among other things, restructuring efforts require that the school engage in vision building where the staff and school community begin to develop and share images of what the school is working towards.

Involving teachers in the decision-making process is another key factor in encouraging teachers to develop strong feelings of ownership of school instructional goals and practices (Rosenholtz, 1985, 1989). In Chicago, the new governance structure provides some mechanisms to encourage teachers to exercise influence over school policy. These include the two teacher members on the LSC and the creation of the PPAC. Schools may have other structures as well, including planning committees or committees created by externally funded programs, some of which may predate reform.

The nature of teachers' work environment has a strong impact on whether or not teachers will participate in school improvement efforts. Johnson (1990) observes, "The reform of schooling and the school as a work place are inseparable," (page 343). She goes on to argue that significant reform requires that the teacher's work place must be transformed in such a way that talented and committed teachers are rewarded and encouraged. Among other things this includes attention to the organizational climate and social relations with colleagues, administrators, and parents.

In summary, the literature on educational change suggests that Chicago teachers will be more likely to engage reform if they are in schools where teachers have influence over decision making, where there is a strong sense of collegiality and mission, and where there is strong leadership.

Method: A Survey

Sample and Data

In May, 1991 the Consortium on Chicago School Research sponsored a survey of the elementary school teachers in Chicago, *Charting Reform: The Teachers' Turn* (Easton et al., 1991). The survey asked teachers about their work, their school community, governance, and their instructional practices. All public elementary schools in the city were offered the opportunity to participate in the study. Schools in which 50 percent or more of the teachers participated were promised a report of the results for their school. Out of 473 elementary schools, 401 participated with a response rate of 50 percent or higher. Data from these 401

schools were used for this analysis of teacher engagement. In all, from the 401 schools, 12,000 teachers provided usable questionnaires, and the average teacher response rate was 78 percent.

Variables Used in The Analyses

To assess engagement, we examined three clusters of questionnaire items, the General Reform Index, the LSC Index, and an index measuring the extent to which teachers worked on their School Improvement Plan, Working on SIP. The law mandates that all schools develop a three-year School Improvement Plan. The General Reform Index includes thirteen questions. These questions covered teachers' affective reactions to reform, whether they saw particular negative consequences, and whether they perceived positive practices emerging from the reform. A few of the questionnaire items in the Index are listed below:

Since reform, there is more cooperation throughout this school.

Since reform, I am optimistic that this school will improve.

Since reform, there are more disruptions to my teaching.

Since reform, staff development is more responsive to teachers' needs

The LSC Index is a composite of four questions about the Local School Council. Teachers were asked to register agreement or disagreement with the following:

The teacher members on the LSC fairly represent my views to the rest of the LSC;

the LSC in this school is a cooperative group of people;

the principal and the LSC work well together in this school; and

the LSC respects teachers' views about how things should be done in this school.

Finally, we examined teachers' involvement in developing and implementing the SIP. We relied on responses to two questions:

I helped develop the School Improvement Plan for my school; and

I am involved in helping to implement our School Improvement Plan.

Models used to analyze the data incorporated both school-level and teacher-level data. Composite school-level variables used as independent variables included the following: school mission (MISSION), teacher influence (INFLNC), principal leadership (LEADER), teacher collegiality (COLLEAG), and community relations (RELATE). These composite variables were constructed first for each teacher and then aggregated to the school level. In addition, information on school characteristics was drawn from the Illinois State Report Card data. These included school size (TOTENRL), information on the schools' prior achievement (COMACH89), and the percentage of students from low income families (PLOWINC).

The following teacher-level variables were also used: age (BACK22), highest level of education (EDLEV), whether the teacher is a minority member (MINORITY), gender (FEMALE), whether the teacher is a primary grade teacher (GRPK-3), whether the teacher is a classroom teacher, rather than a special subject, departmentalized or other kind of teacher (CLASSROOM), whether the teacher is a regular teacher and not a full time substitute (TENURE). The Appendix contains a detailed description of all variables.

Results

Level of Engagement

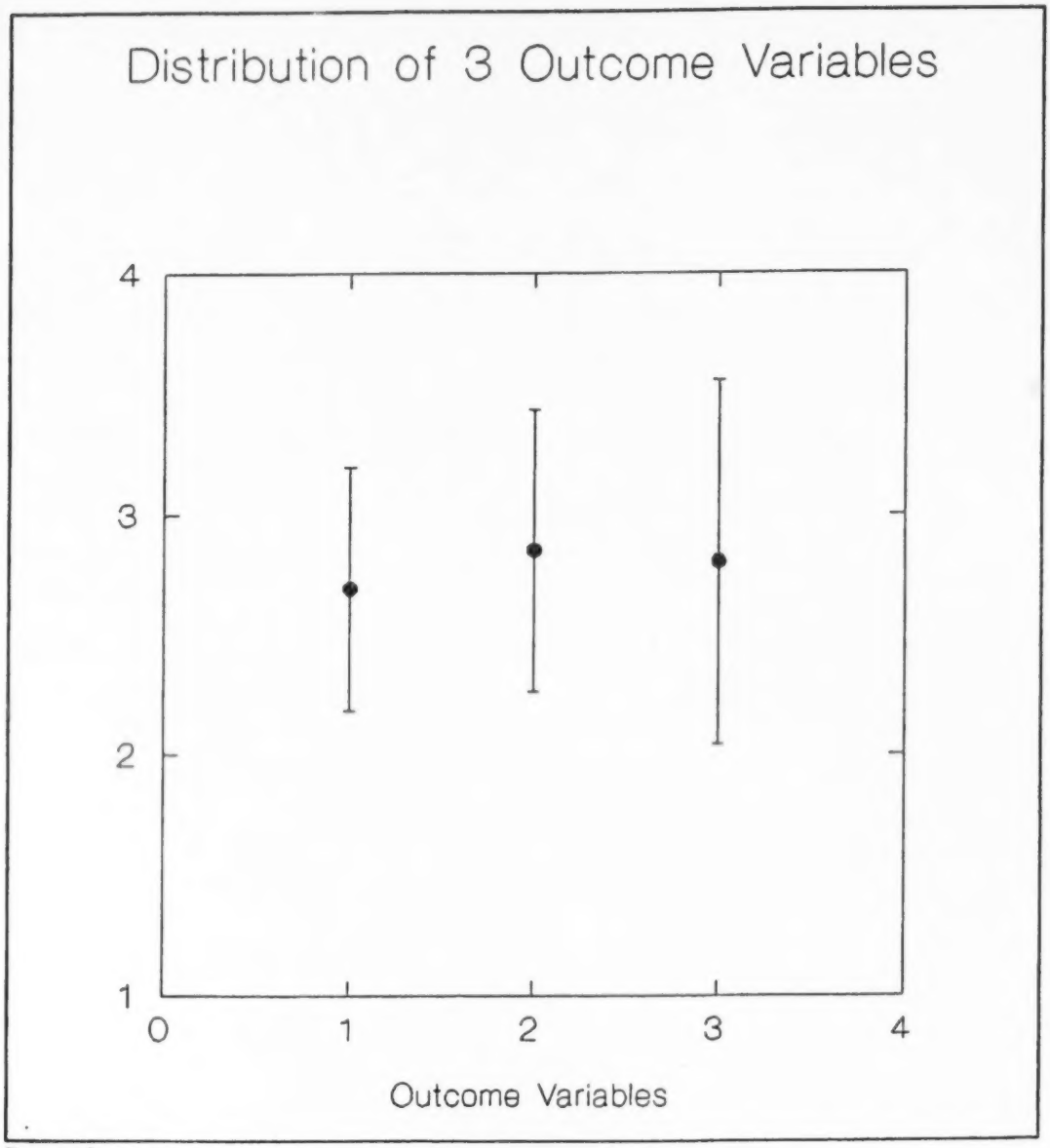
Results of the *Charting Reform* survey indicated that overall, teachers were moderately positive regarding the reform. About 60 percent of elementary school teachers across the city agreed that their school was getting better, and more than half felt better about working in their school. Less than 20 percent of the teachers held strong negative attitudes about school reform. In addition, approximately 60 percent of the teachers disagreed with statements that there was more conflict in their schools or more disruptions to their teaching (Easton et al., 1991).

Looking at differences across schools, the survey revealed that in 15 percent of the schools, teachers were solidly behind reform; in 60 percent of the schools, they were moderately in favor of reform; in 23 percent of the schools teachers were somewhat negative, and in two percent, they were strongly opposed to the reform (Easton et al.).

Regarding their LSCs, two thirds of the teachers thought their principal and councils worked well together and that the teacher representatives on the LSC represented their views. Over half felt that the LSC is a cooperative group of people and that the LSC respects teachers' views on school operations (Easton, et al).

With respect to their own involvement in reform, 56 percent of the teachers indicated they helped develop the School Improvement Plan, and 70 percent stated that they were helping to implement the School Improvement Plan.

Another view of teacher engagement in reform is shown in Figure 1. This plot displays the mean values for the three engagement variables and their respective standard deviations. The



Legend:
Outcomes: 1=GENREF, 2=LSCPERF, 3=SIP
● = mean
– = +/- 1 sd from mean
Note: sds have been adjusted for measurement error

FIGURE 1

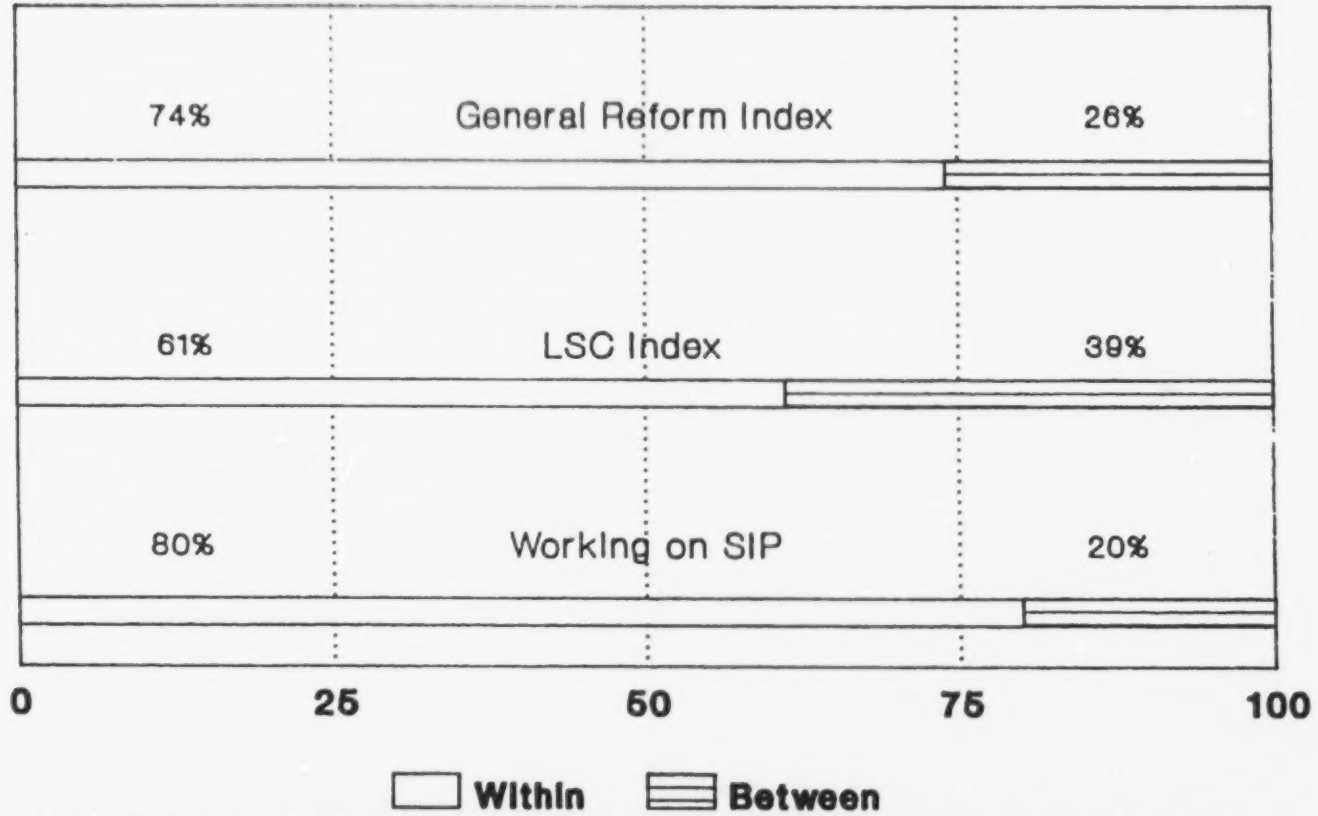
values on the vertical axis run from negative to positive, with the higher values indicating more positive reaction to reform. Similar to findings discussed above, the plot indicates that, overall, teachers are offering moderate support for reform in their school and for their LSC. Most teachers agreed with statements that they are helping to implement the SIP. However, as the standard deviations indicate, there is a great deal of variation in responses, with teachers' reports of working on the SIP varying the most. It is important to note that the variances have been corrected for measurement error, so that they more truly represent real variation in teachers' responses.

Variation Across Schools

Considering the wide variation among teachers in their reported engagement with reform, we turn to our next question, "How does the level of engagement vary across schools?." Figure 2 shows the results of a one-way analysis of variance that partitioned the total variance into within-school and between-school variation. Again measurement error has been removed from the variances. Clearly most variation in these outcomes occurs within schools. Teachers in the typical school appear to be divided about the merits of school reform. This contention is certainly consistent with the finding above that a relatively small proportion of schools seemed to have consensus about reform--15 percent were solidly behind reform, and two percent were clearly negative.

While most of the variation in the three outcomes lies within schools, there is still a substantial amount of variation between schools. We turn now to examine more closely the nature of the differences among schools and the characteristics of schools in which teachers are more engaged in the reform.

Within- and Between-School Variation
In Teachers' Attitudes and Behaviors



Note: Between-school variation has been corrected for measurement error

Figure 2

Schools with Higher Levels of Engagement

In investigating the types of schools which are likely to have higher levels of teacher engagement, we drew on prior research about the importance of teachers' work environment in facilitating their participation in reform. Specifically, we hypothesized that teachers would be more highly engaged in reform in schools where there was a sense of mission, where teachers felt they had influence on school policy, where the leadership appeared to be strong, where there was a sense of collegiality, and where community relations were positive and supportive.

In attempting to account for between-school variation in our three measures of engagement, we examined both school-level and teacher-level data. Specifically we looked for the effects of a number of school characteristics, which are measured at the school level, on teacher engagement, which is measured at the individual level. We also controlled for individual teacher background characteristics. Thus the data have a hierarchical structure: teachers (and their characteristics) are nested within schools (and their characteristics). Consequently, we employed hierarchical linear model (HLM) techniques developed by Bryk and Raudenbush (1992). Hierarchical linear modelling is a recently refined statistical approach that accommodates cross-level analysis and allows us to estimate the effects of certain school attributes on individual teacher behaviors with greater precision than we could with traditional regression analyses.

The first step of the analysis was to estimate the effects of school size and composition on the three outcome variables: the General Reform Index, the LSC Index, and Working on SIP. The hierarchical linear model used for this step is shown below. The model has two equations, one for each level of the analysis. The first equation estimates the within-school

effects of teacher characteristics (β) on the outcome variable (y_{ij}) and produces an adjusted school mean (β_{0j}) for the outcome variable in school j. This is true when the within-school predictors have been centered around the grand mean. The mean is adjusted for teacher-level characteristics. The effects of these characteristics are assumed to be fixed and non-varying across schools. The second equation estimates the effects of school characteristics--school size, prior achievement and low income--on variations in adjusted means across schools.

Teacher-level equation

$$y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1(\text{Age}) + \beta_2(\text{Education}) + \beta_3(\text{Minority}) + \beta_4(\text{Female}) + \beta_5(\text{Primary}) + \beta_6(\text{Classroom}) + \beta_7(\text{Regular Teacher}) + r_{ij}$$

School-level equation

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Size})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{Prior Achievement})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{Low Income})_j + \mu_{0j}$$

The second step of the analysis adds work environment variables to the second level equation. This permits us to assess the effects of work environment variables over and above school size, prior achievement, and the percentage of low-income students. Hence, for this step of the analysis, the first equation remains the same; the second equation is shown below.

School-level equation

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Size})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{Prior Achievement})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{Low Income})_j + \gamma_{04}(\text{Mission})_j + \gamma_{05}(\text{Influence})_j + \gamma_{06}(\text{Leadership})_j + \gamma_{07}(\text{Collegiality})_j + \gamma_{08}(\text{Community Relations})_j + \mu_{0j}$$

Results of the first step of the analysis are shown in Table 1. (Since the focus of this paper is school effects, we have not included the coefficients for teacher-level effects.) The intercept represents the grand mean for each of the outcome variables, and the gamma coefficients are expressed in standard deviation units. That is, the coefficient represents the expected amount of change among schools in the mean outcomes for a one-standard deviation change in the school-level predictors.

Table 1 indicates that school size is negatively related to two of the outcome variables, the LSC Index and Working on SIP. This means that in large schools teachers are less likely to give favorable reports of their LSC and less likely to report they have worked on developing and implementing the SIP. Likewise, low income is negatively related to the LSC Index, indicating that teachers in schools with high percentages of low-income students are less likely to favorably rate their LSC. While these effects are significant, they explain relatively little of the variation between schools.

In previous analyses, the model also included percentage of black students. Because it was not significant we did not include it here. It is important to note, however, that the racial

Table 1

Effects of School Size and Composition on Attitudes Towards Reform, Perceptions of the LSC, and Involvement in School Improvement Planning

	Gamma Coefficient		
	General Ref. Index	LSC Index	Working SIP
Effects			
Intercept, γ_{00}	2.74 ***	2.92 ***	2.82 ***
Size, γ_{01}	− .03	− .07 **	− .09 ***
Prior Achievement, γ_{02}	.02	.05	− .01
Low Income, γ_{03}	− .03	− .09 **	− .03

Between-School Variation Explained	
General Reform Index	4%
LSC Index	10%
Working on SIP	1%

* $p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$

composition of the student body makes no difference in teachers' attitudes and behaviors regarding reform.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the second step of the analysis, which includes the work environment variables. For the General Reform Index, four of the work environment variables are significant--influence, leadership, collegiality and community relations, and they all predict the outcome with approximately equal strength. Since the coefficients are additive, we can make the following interpretation: for each standard deviation increment in the school predictor variable, the adjusted means will rise or fall by the amount of the coefficient. Thus, if a school is one standard deviation above the mean on all four of the significant work environment variables, the mean score on the General Reform Index would be 3.06 (2.74 + .08 + .08 + .09 + .07). Consequently, teachers are likely to view the reform favorably in schools where they have influence over school policy, where they respect the principal and value his or her leadership, where there is a sense of collegiality among the staff, and where there is community support for the school.

Looking at the LSC Index, leadership, collegiality and community relations were significant predictors, with the latter two variables yielding the strongest effects. Considering that there are two teacher representatives on the LSC, it is logical that collegiality influences teachers' attitudes toward the LSC. Likewise, it is not surprising that teachers in schools enjoying positive community relations have greater respect for their LSC than teachers in schools where little community support exists. Eight of the eleven members of the LSC are parents and community members. Chances are that, if the community is viewed as supportive, teachers will have more confidence in the LSC.

Table 2

Effects of School Size, Composition, and Work Environment on Attitudes Towards Reform, Perceptions of the LSC, and Involvement in School Improvement Planning

	Gamma Coefficient		
	General Ref. Index	LSC Index	Working SIP
Effects			
Intercept, γ_{00}	2.74 ***	2.92 ***	2.82 ***
Size, γ_{01}	.01	− .04 *	− .04
Prior Achievement, γ_{02}	− .06 ***	− .08 *	− .06 *
Low Income, γ_{03}	− .01	− .07 **	− .01
Mission, γ_{04}	− .02	− .04	.10 *
Influence, γ_{05}	.08 ***	.04	.22 ***
Leadership, γ_{06}	.08 ***	.08 *	− .07
Collegiality, γ_{07}	.07 **	.15 ***	− .03
Community Rel., γ_{08}	.09 ***	.18 ***	.01

Between-School Variation Explained	
General Reform Index	69%
LSC Index	58%
Working on SIP	38%

* $p<.05$ **$p<.01$ ***$p<.001$

With respect to Working on the SIP, mission and influence were significant predictors, with influence being the strongest by far. Intuitively, it makes sense that teachers are more likely to become involved in school improvement planning in schools where they have influence over school policies on curriculum, student behavior, budget, staffing, etc. Where teachers have little or no such influence, there is no incentive to participate in school improvement planning. In such schools the SIP may be viewed as a bureaucratic exercise which requires teachers to devote considerable time but ultimately has little impact on school policy.

The results for mission indicate that, in schools where there is a stronger sense of mission, teachers will be more likely to work on school improvement activities. Consensus among the teachers and the principal about goals and values seem to facilitate more participation in developing and implementing the SIP. We cannot rule out either, that there may be some reverse causation or at least reciprocal causation. Working on the SIP is likely to strengthen the consensus on goals and values and thus deepen the sense of shared mission.

Now, let's return to the size and composition variables in Table 2. Note that, once the work environment variables are added to the equation, the effects of school size diminish. We believe that school size is still important; small schools have more opportunity for face-to-face interaction and thus facilitate the emergence of mission, influence, leadership, collegiality, and community relations. In the equation, size appears to work through these other variables. Size is related to the work environment variables, and they are in turn related to the LSC Index and Working on SIP. Once the work environment variables are added to the equation, the portion of the size coefficient which overlaps with these variables disappears. Hence, even though its effect becomes diminished, size is still consequential, albeit indirectly.

Prior Achievement has a more complicated story. In the first model, where only the size and composition variables are present, prior achievement was not significantly related to any of the outcome variables. However, once the work environment variables are added, the coefficients for prior achievement increase to the point of being significant. When the work environment variables are controlled for, the schools' prior achievement as negatively related to engagement. This means that teachers in schools where pre-reform achievement was lower are more likely than other teachers to have favorable attitudes toward reform and to be working on school improvement.

This latter analysis suggests that, all things being equal with respect to the work environment variables, teachers in high achieving schools are less likely than teachers in low achieving schools to be positive with respect to the reform. This may signal that teachers in high achieving schools are more neutral about reform; they may feel they were already achieving success with their students before this reform began. They may have little enthusiasm for the involvement of outsiders in a school that was working well to start with. Teachers in lower performing schools, however, could feel greater need for change, and if they are in schools where the positive work environment factors exist, they are more likely to engage the reform.

Conclusions

Since 1989, the Chicago Public Schools have been engaged in one of the most dramatic reform efforts in the country. The reform legislation resulted from the work of a coalition of advocacy organizations, community groups, business, and parents, with only nominal

participation of the teachers. From the teachers' point of view this had to be viewed as change imposed by outside forces. In fact, the reform has been characterized as "anti-professional" in that it granted parents and community members majority votes on the Local School Council. Under these circumstances, it could be argued that the evidence presented here of at least moderate engagement is more than might be expected. Teachers' responses to most questions about changes in their school since reform and whether they expected their school to improve were generally on the positive side of the scale. A majority also indicated respect for their LSC and that they had helped to implement the SIP. On the other hand, if the reform effort is to succeed, particularly in bringing improvements to teaching and learning, luke warm endorsement by teachers is likely to fall short of what is needed to achieve real change.

The results of the *Charting Reform* survey also revealed considerable variation in teachers' level of engagement with most of the variation within schools. This means that schools where there is consensus on reform are rare. In the typical school the faculty is divided about the merits of reform.

In examining the remaining variation between schools, we found considerable evidence to support Johnson's assertion that "The reform of schooling and the school as a work place are inseparable," (1990, p. 343). Teachers were more likely to give high marks to reform if they were in schools where they had some influence over school policy, where there was strong leadership, where there was a sense of collegiality among teachers, and where the community was perceived as supportive. In addition, they were more likely to rate their LSC positively in schools with high collegiality and community support. Finally, in schools where teachers

already had influence over school policy, respondents to this survey were more likely to report working on the development and implementation of their School Improvement Plan.

Chicago school reform is predicated on the efficacy of shared decision making at the local site. This requires that teachers, principals, parents, and community members work together; it requires strong leadership from the principal to orchestrate the collaboration of these groups, and the school-improvement planning process will work best when there is already a sense of shared mission. Thus, it is not surprising that teachers in schools where these conditions operate were more favorable regarding the new school reform.

Teachers are key players in transforming governance reform into educational reform. This, of course, is an enormous task, and it is this aspect of reform that has stymied many past reform efforts. In fact, teachers were asked whether changes made since reform had any effect on their instruction, and over half said no (Easton et al., 1991). Evidence from this analysis suggests that it is unlikely that teachers will contribute measurably to the goals of reform, unless there are supportive conditions in the school.

In the further implementation and refinement of reform, policy makers, administrators, and teachers themselves need to attend to teachers' work environment, especially the social and human relations, in order to provide the encouragement and support teachers need if they are to embark on change and become full partners in school improvement.

References

Bryk, A.S. and Raudenbush, S.W. (1992) *Hierarchical Linear Models*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

Easton, J.Q.; Bryk, A.S.; Driscoll, M.E.; Kotsakis, J.G.; Sebring, P.A.; and van der Ploeg, A.J. (1991). *Charting Reform: The Teachers' Turn*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Fullan, M.G. (1991). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Johnson, S.M. (1990) *Teachers at Work: Achieving Success in our Schools*. New York: Basic Books.

Louis, Karen Seashore and Matthew Miles. *Improving the urban high school: What works and why*. NY: Teachers College Press, 1990.

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1989) *Teachers' workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York: Longman.

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1985). Effective Schools: Interpreting the Evidence. *American Journal of Education*. Volume 93, Number 3.

APPENDIX

Description of Variables Used in Analyses

Teacher-level Dependent Variables

GENREF: General Reform Index. A composite variable of teachers' attitudes about the school since reform (e.g., I feel better working in this school), reports of negative events (e.g.,there are more disruptions to my teaching), and positive changes (e.g., staff development is more responsive to teachers' needs). Reliability=.88.

LSCPRF: Local School Council Index. A composite variable of teachers' perceptions of the character of the relations within the LSC (e.g., LSC is a cooperative group of people) and whether LSC takes teachers' views into account (e.g., LSC respects teachers' views). Reliability=.82.

WORKSIP Working on School Improvement Plan. A composite variable indicating whether teachers helped to develop and implement the SIP. Reliability=.76.

Teacher-level Predictors

BACK22 Age of the respondent.

EDLEV Highest level of education attained by the teacher. Includes Bachelor's, Master's, Master's plus 15 hours, Master's plus 30 hours, Master's plus 45 hours, and Doctorate.

MINORITY A dummy variable. (1 = black or Hispanic; 0 = others)

FEMALE A dummy variable. (1 = female; 0 = male)

GRPK-3 A dummy variable for grade taught. (1 = prekindergarten through third grade; 0 = fourth through eighth grade and ungraded)

CLASSROOM A dummy variable for regular classroom teacher. (1 = self contained classroom teacher, including teachers in self contained classrooms who indicated they also taught special education, bilingual education and Chapter 1; 0 = all others.

TENURE A dummy variable for regular tenured and regular non-tenured teachers. (1 = regular tenured and regular non-tenured; 0 = full time basis substitutes and others)

School-level Predictors

COMACH89 Mean value of the school's 1988-89 Illinois Goals Assessment Program scores in third, sixth, and eighth grade reading and mathematics.

PLOWINC Percent of students eligible for free or reduced cost lunch

TOTENRL Total Enrollment

COLLEAG Collegiality. A composite variable that describes the degree to which staff members cooperate, encourage each other, and relations are cordial.

MISSION School Mission. A composite variable indicating whether there are clear goals and shared beliefs among the professional staff about school mission.

LEADER School Leadership. A composite variable regarding whether the staff feel supported, expectations are clear, decision making is collaborative, and the principal does a good job getting resources for the school.

INFLNC Teacher Influence. A composite variable on teachers' influence in the school over such matters as student behavior codes, content of in-service programs, school curriculum, hiring personnel, and budgets.

RELATE Community Relations. A composite variable on community support of the school and the school's effort to reach out to the community.